

Dancing in the Dark by King_Latifah

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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Characters: Bob Newby, Jim "Chief" Hopper

Relationships: Jim "Chief" Hopper/Bob Newby

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Summary:

They aren't *dating* each other, and they will be quick to point this out — they simply share her, finding themselves in one another's spheres, growing progressively closer the same way ice cubes melt together into one single mass.

(Jim Hopper and Bob Newby share a revelation in the quiet hours before dawn.)

Dancing in the Dark

Author's Note:

I just have a lot of feelings about the song “I Get Along Without You Very Well (Except Sometimes)” by Chet Baker and also about Hopper and Bob, my Actual Husbands

Rain hums through the woods and Chet Baker sings a circle around the two of them, dancing alone on Hopper’s carpet.

Everything about the routine is unfamiliar— Expecting Joyce’s softness, their hands rest against firm hips and awkwardly hold solid hands, and they are no longer the man towering above a swooning damsel. Hopper’s taller, yes, and he’ll tease Bob about it until the cows come home, but without Joyce, they’re equals here. They both automatically take the same position, reaching for the other’s hips, both chuckle as Hopper acquiesces and puts his hands on Bob’s shoulders. They both stalk around uncomfortably on fully-extended legs for the first couple songs until they manage to will themselves into comfort and begin to actually dance.

Jane’s over at Mike’s and Joyce is asleep in the next room in a bed big enough for the three of them, and as always, she is in the center. Bob and Hopper will laze over to the bedroom when the time comes and take either side of her, never moving to the middle or changing sides; they aren’t *dating* each other, and they will be quick to point this out— they simply share her, finding themselves in one another’s spheres, growing progressively closer the same way ice cubes melt together into one single mass.

“You know,” Bob says, looking up at Hopper with eyes full of stars, “I think it’s time we acknowledged this weird love-triangle deal we have going on here. We’re going to have to, sometime.”

He’s pressed so close to Hopper that he can smell the cigarettes and liquor on his breath from two hours ago. Hopper looks down at him, glances quickly over to the doorway to make sure Joyce is still asleep. He smiles, and in the trademark molasses voice that Bob’s

always secretly loved: “Well, that’s true. But now isn’t that time.”

(Bob kisses him first, and the move is so quick and soft that for a moment, all Hopper can do is continue dancing.)